

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-25 are presently active in this case, Claims 1 and 12 amended by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 6-14 and 19-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 7,311,797 to O'Donnell et al.; and Claims 2-5 and 15-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over O'Donnell et al.

Turning now to the merits, in order to expedite issuance of a patent in this case, Applicants have amended Claims 1 and 12 to clarify the patentable features of the present invention over the cited references. Specifically, Applicants' Claim 1, as amended, recites a method for adjoining at least two protective barriers on a processing element. The method includes defining a transition region on the processing element, the transition region including an overlap of a first protective barrier and a second protective barrier. The first protective barrier is applied to a first region of the processing element, the first region including a region where the second protective barrier is not applied and including the transition region. A second region of the processing element is treated in order to improve adhesion of the second protective barrier, the second region including a region where the first protective barrier is not applied and also including the transition region. Also recited is applying the second protective barrier to the second region such that the second protective barrier overlaps the first protective barrier only in the transition region of the first and second regions.

Thus, Applicants' Claim 1 clarifies that the first region includes a region where the second protective barrier is not applied, the second region includes a region where the first

protective barrier is not applied, and both the first and second regions include the transition region where the first and second protective barriers overlap. Claim 12 has been amended to include similar features. Figure 2D of Applicants' specification shows an example of the processing element covered by amended Claims 1 and 12. As seen in this figure, the processing element 100 includes a first region 140 that extends into the transition region 110 and includes a first protective barrier 120 thereon. The processing element 100 includes a second region 142 that also extends into the transition region 110, and includes a second protective barrier thereon. Thus, the first and second regions each include a portion having a respective protective barrier alone, and each include the transition region 110 as an overlap area where the first and second protective barriers overlap. According to amended Claims 1 and 12, the transition region is defined by the region of overlapping protective barriers. As discussed in Applicants' specification, such transition region provides improved protection against corrosive material to which the processing element is exposed.

In contrast, O'Donnell et al. discloses a component having an anodized layer thereon, and also having a yttria containing coating provided on the anodized layer. In particular, Figure 2 of O'Donnell et al. discloses an aluminum gas ring 40 having a coating 42 thereon. As discussed in O'Donnell et al., the coating 42 is provided only on exposed surfaces of the gas ring 40. Thus, as seen in Figure 2, other portions of the gas ring 40 such as the gas hole 50 and the gas guiding trench 60 do not include the coating 42 thereon; these surfaces may be anodized such that the gas ring includes both an anodized surface and a yttria surface. However, there is no discussion in O'Donnell et al. of any particular structure where the anodized surface having coating 42 transitions to a surface having only the anodization layer thereon.

That is, O'Donnell et al. does not teach or suggest providing a transition region for improving the life of the coated component. More specifically, O'Donnell et al. does not

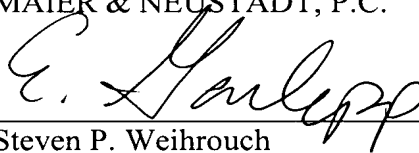
disclose applying a first protective barrier to a first region including a region where the second protective barrier is not applied and a transition region, and treating a second region where the first protective barrier is not applied and including the transition region as required by Claims 1 and 12. Therefore, independent Claims 1 and 12 patentably define over O'Donnell et al. As Claims 2-11 and 13-25 depend from Claims 1 and 12, respectively, these dependent claims also patentably define over the cited reference to O'Donnell et al.

Nevertheless, Applicants note that the dependent claims include further structural features of the transition region which further patentably define over the cited references. For example, Claims 3-5 and 16-18 further define that the transition region includes an edge having an edge radius with particular dimensions. The outstanding Office Action merely concludes that it is a simple matter of design choice to provide the features recited in these claims. However, as discussed throughout Applicants' specification, use of an edge radius with these dimensions further facilitates an effective transition region between the first and second protective barriers. There is no indication in the cited prior art for providing these features for any other purpose. Therefore, Claims 3-5 and 16-18 provide further distinctions over the cited reference to O'Donnell et al.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "E. Garlepp", written over a horizontal line.

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